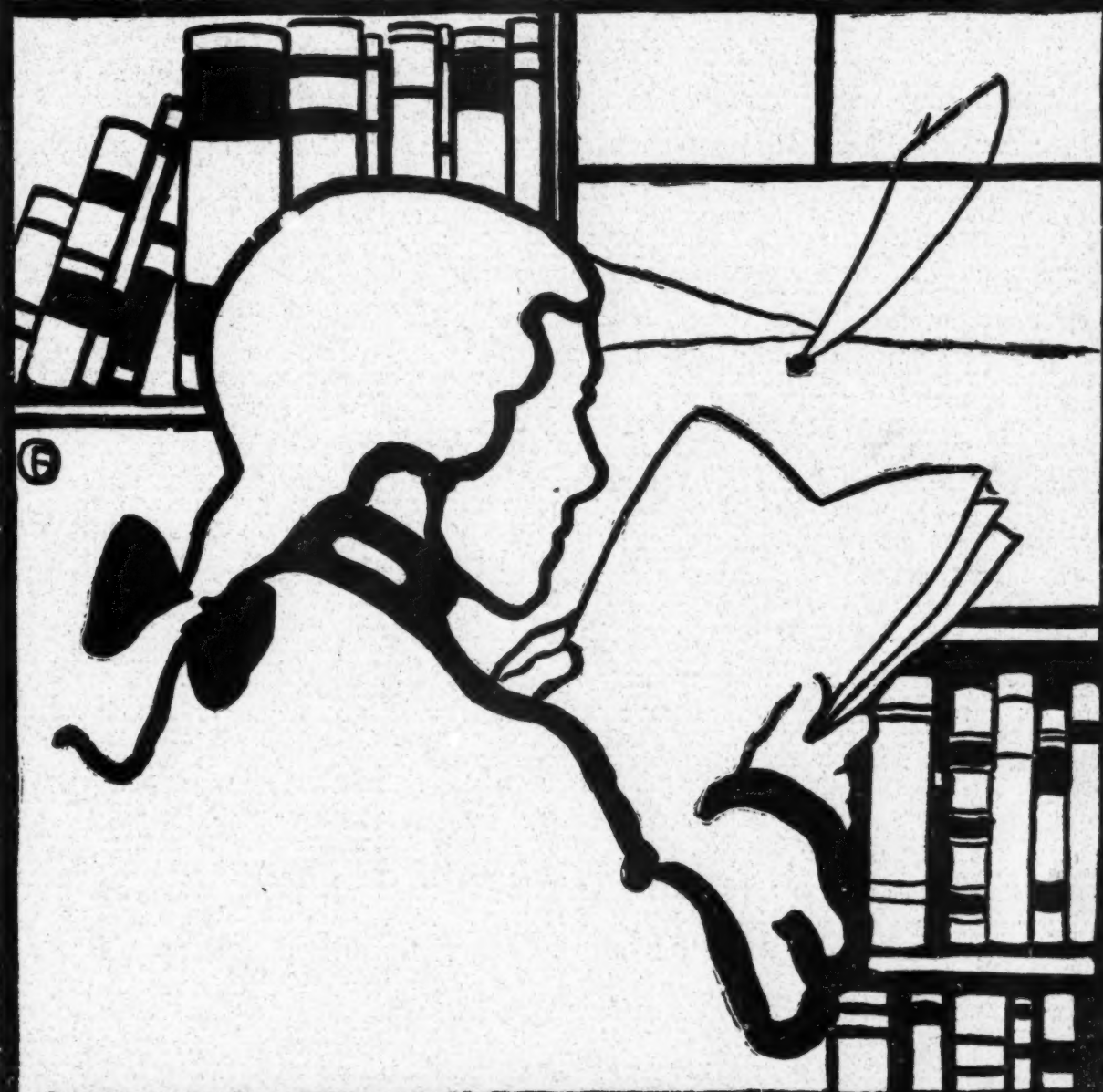


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Tablet.

"The School for Saints' was good, but 'Robert Orange' (Fisher Unwin), unlike most sequels, is better."—*Star*.

"'Robert Orange' is a sequel to 'The School for Saints,' and a worthy sequel; but it may be read very well, by a slight exercise of the imagination in the concluding chapters, as a single production, and, to read, it will produce an abiding impression on any thoughtful mind.....'Robert Orange' is an eminently religious book, but it is conspicuously bright also; it is political, but it is also witty; it is philosophical, but it is also shrewd; it is an artistic collection of character studies, but they are all human, and nearly all of individual and original type. But it has action also; in it many love stories run their troubled course simultaneously."—*Country Life*.

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The Literary Week.

UNDETERRED by the lack of public interest in war books, Mr. Winston Churchill is preparing another for the autumn. It will be called *Ian Hamilton's March: being Letters Reprinted from the "Morning Post," with Some Unpublished Letters.*

WE cannot bring ourselves to admire the flamboyant style of the war correspondence with which Mr. A. G. Hales is startling the readers of the *Daily News*, and of other papers too; for Mr. Hales's articles are being widely quoted. He has quick eyes, a picturesque pen, a reach-me-down command of sentiment, brimming enthusiasm, and a lack of reserve that is not without its charm. Mr. Hales is certainly readable, but we cannot commend his style. He can write a sentence like this, and then not erase it: "He is as full of anecdote as heaven is full of angels, and I mean to use him in the sweet days of peace."

BEFORE the first number of the *Badminton Magazine* was published, in August, 1895, the editor, Mr. Alfred E. T. Watson, received from Major R. S. S. Baden-Powell the offer of an article on "Pig-Sticking." The offer was accepted, other contributions followed, and when the defence of Mafeking made the author's name the most popular in the country, Mr. Watson cabled to Mafeking for permission to collect the articles and publish them in a book. After a long wait, assent came from Major-General Baden-Powell, from Rustenburg, in the single word—"Yes"! That is well; but what is not well is the way the book is ornamented. Every page is enclosed by a hideous and meaningless green frame that dazzles the eye, and makes reading an effort. So pleased is the publisher with the border that he dumps it down on the advertisement pages, and even on those that are blank. We sincerely hope this is not a new fashion in book-making.

THE late Lord Tennyson would have been surprised to learn that, in the autumn of the year 1900, his life would form one of the "Saintly Lives Series." The task is Dr. Horton's.

THOSE who know the inner history of Mr. Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim* will be amused at the announcement in the *Westminster Gazette* that the first instalment appears in *Blackwood's* for August. We understand that this story was originally intended to be a short one; but Mr. Conrad became so interested in his own creation that he asked to be allowed to develop it. Hence, month after month, Lord Jim's fortunes have gone on expanding, and they are still "To be continued."

MRS. CRAIGIE is under contract to write a long serial for *Harper's Magazine*. Of the first edition of *Robert Orange* 10,000 copies were printed, of the first sixpenny edition of *The School for Saints* 30,000 were printed. New editions of both books are in preparation.

THE result of the *Daily News* plebiscite as to which are the best pictures of the year at the Royal Academy shows that the shilling picture public is still faithful to Mr. Dicksee and Mr. Leader. The popular taste improves slowly—very slowly. "The Two Crowns" is "the best picture of all," and the "best landscape" is still by Mr. Leader. Among the prize-winners we notice the names of Mr. Harry Quilter, the daughter of an Academician, and the son and daughter of a distinguished caricaturist. 1,094 replies were sent in.

	NAME OF PICTURE.	NAMES OF ARTIST.
The Best Picture of All	The Two Crowns ...	Frank Dicksee, R.A.
The Best Subject Picture	Trial of Queen Katherine	E. A. Abbey, R.A.
The Best Portrait ..	Lord Russell of Killowen	J. S. Sargent, R.A.
The Best Landscape	Hill, Vale, and Stream	B. W. Leader, R.A.
The Best Sea Picture	Ocean's Surge	Peter Graham, R.A.
The Best Animal Picture	Horses Bathing in the Sea	Miss F. Kemp-Welch.
The Best Water Colour	Isola San Giuliano	Sir E. J. Poynter, P.R.A.
The Best Piece of Sculpture	Tomb of Lord Leighton	Thomas Brock, R.A.
The Picture You would Like Best to Live With	Gold Fish	Sir L. Alma-Tadema, R.A.
The Picture with Most Heart in it	The Sale of Old Dobbin	J. R. Reid.
The Prettiest Face...	Miss Evelyn Oulesa	H. T. Wells, R.A.
The Best-Looking Man	Lord Kitchener ...	A. S. Cope, A.R.A.
The Nicest Baby ...	La Vierge Aux Lys	W. A. Bouguereau.
The Prettiest Dress	Mrs. Murray Guthrie	Sir E. J. Poynter, P.R.A.

WE take the following from the *British Weekly*: "Mr. Alfred Harmsworth tells his friends that he has another big journalistic venture on the tapis. Without being too rash, I may venture to guess that Mr. Harmsworth thinks of a great illustrated weekly newspaper on fresh lines."

IT is said that Mr. Henry Newbolt will edit a new monthly, to be published by Mr. John Murray, under the title of the *Review of the Month*.

IN the next number of the *Anglo-Saxon Review* Mr. Andrew Lang will write on "Seeresses."

WHAT were the books that most influenced Robert Louis Stevenson in his most impressionable years? Stevenson has left us in no doubt on the point, and the early article in which he made his literary confession now reaches us as a comely little paper booklet, issued by Messrs. Mansfield, of New York. In it Stevenson begins by saying that "the course of our education is answered best by those poems and romances where we breathe a magnanimous atmosphere of thought and meet generous and pious characters. Among these Shakespeare has served me best." After Shakespeare comes Dumas, as his genius was embodied in the character of D'Artagnan—"the elderly D'Artagnan of the *Vicomte de Bragelonne*. I know not a more human soul, nor, in his way, a finer." Thirdly, the *Pilgrim's Progress*. Among didactic books, the *Essays of Montaigne* and the New Testament came next in order of time, particularly the Gospel of Matthew. Walt Whitman followed, and Goethe's *Life*, by Lewes.

I know no one whom I less admire than Goethe; he seems a very epitome of the sins of genius, breaking open the doors of private life, and wantonly wounding friends, in that crowning offence of "Werther," and in his own character a mere pen-and-ink Napoleon, conscious of the rights and duties of superior talents as a Spanish inquisitor was conscious of the rights and duties of his office. And yet in his fine devotion to his art, in his honest and serviceable friendship for Schiller, what lessons are contained!

Marcus Aurelius and Wordsworth come next. Then—

I should never forgive myself if I forgot *The Egoist*. It is art, if you like, but it belongs purely to didactic art, and from all the novels I have read (and I have read thousands) stands in a place by itself. Here is a Nathan for the modern David. . . . *The Egoist* is a satire; so much must be allowed; but it is a satire of a singular quality, which tells you nothing of that obvious motive which is engaged from first to last with that invisible beam. It is yourself that is hunted down; these are your own faults that are dragged into the day and numbered, with lingering relish, with cruel cunning and precision.

Lastly, gathering up less remembered masters, Stevenson remarks that Hazlitt's paper "On the Spirit of Obligations" was a turning-point in his life, and that in Mitford's *Tales of Old Japan* he learned, "for the first time, the proper attitude of any rational man to his country's laws—a secret found, and kept, in the Asiatic islands." We must not omit to mention Stevenson's warm tribute to Herbert Spencer as a wholesome and bracing writer, whose works are informed with a certain "highly abstract joy." "I should be much of a hound if I lost my gratitude to Herbert Spencer."

In the summer number of the *Argosy* Mr. Andrew Lang writes characteristically about the late Mr. Grant Allen. "Mr. Allen," he says, "was not a novel-reader; I doubt if most novelists do read novels. Scott, Thackeray, Mr. Stevenson were greedy and multifarious readers of romance, so are most judges; but the mass of novelists do not read their contemporaries or predecessors. In this indifference, then, Mr. Allen was not a paradoxical exception." Mr. Lang puts his criticism of *The Woman Who Did* thus:

The gospel is one-sided. . . . Mr. Allen never wrote a novel on the following lines. A (male) marries B, a pretty, stupid lass. In a year or two A finds B out; tires of her, meets C. A high sense of morality urges A to desert B (who has grown stout, or is in bad health), and to elope with C. What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. The higher morality ought to be applied all round. But Mr. Allen never, for some reason, wrote a novel to preach this part of the new creed. The fact is, that, even if custom sanctioned the system of non-marriage, a gentleman would not take advantage of custom; would not break the heart of a woman who had given to

him her love and her youth. Of course the thing is done, but he who does it is—

"What you call a sinner; what I call a sweep,"

as Mr. Stevenson's hero says to the missionary.

NEWCASTLE HOUSE, the fine old mansion in the north-west corner of Lincoln's Inn Fields, which has just been sold, is not altogether without literary associations. Doubtless it was from his library in this house that the Duke of Newcastle lent the MS. of the Spence anecdotes to Dr. Johnson to aid him in compiling his *Lives of the Poets*. A good story of the house, non-literary in itself, is told by Hawkins in his *Life of Johnson* which someone has recently suggested should be reprinted. It set forth that Sir Thomas Robinson, a great tuft-hunter, used to annoy the household by his frequent calls. When told that the Duke was out he would ask to be allowed to look at the clock, or to play with a monkey that was kept in the hall, in the hope of snatching an interview with his Grace. At last he wore out the patience of the Duke and his servants to such an extent that a rebuff was arranged. When Sir Thomas next called the servant, without giving him time to open his lips, shut the door, saying: "Sir, his Grace is gone out, the clock stands, and the monkey is dead." Newcastle House became at a later date the home of the S.P.C.K. before the removal of that body to Northumberland-avenue.

It was not to be expected that the amateur statician would wait for the completion of the *Oxford English Dictionary* before dealing with its noble dimensions. One student has already produced a mass of figures which leave on the mind a generally useful impression of the vastness of Dr. Murray's work. Taking the volumes from the first down to the word Infer, but excluding those from Graded to the end G (all of which are not published), the statician finds that there have already appeared 16,516 columns, 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches long. If these columns, each 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, were set on end the type would extend for upwards of 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles—4,645 yards, or say

Nearly four times as high as Snowdon.

Only 602 yards short of the height of Mont Blanc.

Over 38 times as high as to the top of the Cross on St. Paul's Cathedral.

Nearly 69 times the height of the Monument.

More than 14 times as high as the Eiffel Tower.

Upwards of 15 times the length of London Bridge.

Almost 100 times round the dome of the reading-room of the British Museum.

It is also calculated that the Dictionary already contains more than seventy million letters, and more than twelve million words; while for a penny the purchaser receives 1 yard, 1 foot, and 8 inches of erudition 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. We take these facts from Mr. Henry Frowde's excellent little publication, *The Periodical*. Do we confess a damaging ignorance when we ask for the source of the *Periodical's* motto?

A jollie good book, whereon to looke,
Is better to me than golde.

A WRITER in the July *Edinburgh Review* weighs with considerable judgment the merits of the three women writers whose works are just now the delight of the normal British reader—Miss Corelli, Miss Fowler, and Miss Cholmondeley. His judgment on Miss Corelli is as severe as it is casual:

It is impossible in an essay of this kind to omit at least so much reference to her as is contained in saying that her work is entirely undeserving of any consideration.

On Miss Fowler the vials of criticism are emptied with a more reluctant hand:

We cannot take her picture of society seriously; she knows not enough of life or of the world. But she is

witty, she is shrewd, and she may live to be more discriminating in her selection of epigrams; and if she is wise she will return to the genuine sources of her talent. By far the best thing in her books is the study of Martha, the old servant in the Seaton household—a character who gives her creator fair claim to rank not merely as a wit, but as a humorist. It is a depressing circumstance that Miss Fowler's books have certainly not improved as they went on—in this respect or in any other.

Miss Cholmondeley receives a cold blessing:

Her work has a fine intellectual distinction, and, as we have shown, unusual constructive power, yet somehow one cannot look forward confidently to any such advance as would give her a permanent place in literature. Still we recognise gratefully that her books are not only pleasant to read, but are likely to exercise a salutary influence on morals and manners, for they are written by a woman who is evidently in touch, socially and intellectually, with the best culture of the day. Her philosophy of conduct and opinion is not paraded in detached passages, but it underlies the whole texture of her work, and there is nothing cheap or secondhand about it; such as it is, it is genuinely assimilated.

THE readers of *Moonshine* have decided between them that the ideal ten books for reading during a five years' sojourn on a desert island are these:

Shakespeare.
The Bible.
Pickwick Papers.
Tennyson.
Vanity Fair.
Robinson Crusoe.
Pilgrim's Progress.
David Copperfield.
Lamb's Essays.
Milton.

We confess that the list does not appeal to us. The books named would be equally ideal, or un-ideal, for a five years' sojourn in Bloomsbury apartments.

In the *National Review* Mr. Leslie Stephen suggests that Walter Bagehot has not yet received his due of fame. The interest of the article is, however, not so literary as it might have been. Mr. Stephen, confessedly, hardly deals with Bagehot as a critic; but from a page or so on this subject we cull a few general remarks:

Bagehot's criticisms [says Mr. Stephen] have, above all things, the essential merits of freshness and sincerity. If he has not the special knowledge, he is absolutely free from the pedantry, of the literary expert. He has none of the cant of criticism, and never bores us with "romantic and classical" or "objective and subjective." When he wants a general theory—as he always does—he strikes one out in the heat of the moment. He has almost a trick—as I have hinted—of dividing all writers into two classes: philosophers are either "seers" or "gropers"; novelists are "miscellaneous" or "sentimental"; genius is symmetrical or irregular, and so forth. Such classifications will not always bear reflection: they only give emphasis to a particular aspect; but they show how his mind is always swarming with theories, and how he looks upon literature as a man primarily interested in the wider problems of life and character which literature reflects.

In the same review, a writer signing himself "An Englishman" writes very disturbing things about our readiness to meet an invasion. His article is suggestively entitled "Having Eyes They See Not." The whole article is one of bitter protest; and we are interested to see that the writer, whose own powers of expression are not meagre, calls in the aid of Matthew Arnold, making words which he wrote many years ago live and quiver in the light of a present crisis. Arnold's warning was as follows:

You may get involved in war, and you imagine that you cannot but make war well by dint of being so very rich; that you will just add a penny or two to your income-tax,

change none of your ways, have clap-trap everywhere, as at present, unrestricted independence, legions of newspaper correspondents, boundless publicity; and thus, at a grand high pressure of expenditure, bustle, and excitement, arrive at a happy and triumphant result. But authority and victory over people who are in earnest means being in earnest oneself, and your Philistines are not in earnest; they have no idea great enough to make them so. They want to be important and authoritative; . . . they want to drive a roaring trade; they want to know and criticise all that is being done; they want no restrictions on their personal liberty, no interference with their usual way of going on; they want all these incompatible things equally and at once, because they have no idea deep and strong enough to subordinate everything else to itself.

It is odd to think how an English boy and girl, who has free access to books, and loves reading, may grow up with the vaguest ideas about the material construction of a book and its literary anatomy. In America this danger is now foreseen, and at least one great public library gives simple instruction such as, one sees at a glance, must produce excellent results. The method is described as follows:

The children are shown a title-page and told the meaning of the imprint, publisher's name, place and date of publication. Turning the page, they are shown the copyright entry, and are told its meaning, how long copyright lasts, why the date of copyright is different from and more important than the date on the title-page; and finally are reminded of the clause of the Constitution authorising Congress to grant copyright. Proceeding, the value of preface or introduction is suggested, the difference between a table of contents and an index is described, and how and when to use each. Finally, the chief steps in the manufacture of a book are detailed. The sheets of paper are exhibited as first printed, and are then folded into signatures; the manner in which signatures are sewn on the bands is indicated, and the way the back is rounded, the covers laced on, sided up, and backed. Each step is illustrated by books in different stages of binding; and as the process is explained it is carefully demonstrated how careless treatment injures the books. We are confident that more careful handling of the books has resulted already from the children's having gained an intelligent comprehension of how the book is made, why shutting a pencil in it starts the bands, or opening it improperly breaks the back.

All this is imparted in one simple lecture. In a second lecture more advanced pupils are taught the use of reference books of all kinds, and a third lecture deals with more advanced reference books, catalogues, &c. The idea seems to be excellent.

In a note on Mr. Charles Fèret's *Fulham, Old and New* last week we gave the price of this work as four guineas. That is the price of specially interleaved copies; the price of the work in its ordinary form is three guineas. We are glad to hear that there is an interleaved edition—an excellent idea.

THOSE who are writing for posterity may like to hear of Higgins's *Eternal Ink*, advertised in American literary papers. We are told that "the seven stomachs of a camel, not to speak of its long and thirsty neck, never wished for the oasis spring more than cultured man has for a true black writing ink." Possibly, but we know some very cultured writers who never use ink at all. They descant on the advantages of a lead pencil.

UNLIKE an American writer to whom we referred last week, Mr. William Archer does not find a Whitmanesque delight in the musical comedies of the day. In the July *New York Critic* he writes concerning these plays:

I have no sympathy with Mr. Sheldon's total boycotting of the theatre. But if he had gone manfully into the temple of art and tried to scourge from it the dealers in

patently noxious wares—rancid vulgarity and leering uncleanness—he would have earned my heartiest applause. . . . Vulgar entertainments there will always be so long as there are people of vulgar tastes to be catered for. But their popularity, in England at any rate, would be much less overwhelming if people of culture and refinement did not affect and even parade in regard to the theatre a vulgarity of taste which they would blush to own in regard to any other department of art or of life.

In conclusion, Mr. Archer says:

We must draw a clearer line between what is reputable and what is disreputable in the work of the stage before we can blame our Puritan assailants for not recognising the distinction. I do not myself think the Puritan ideal of life a practicable one, and am far from desiring that the stage should ever conform to it; but that is no reason why I should stand by unprotesting, and see a beautiful art soiled by brainless pruriency and reckless license. It was a dramatist (and assuredly no Puritan) who wrote—

The best of men
That e'er wore earth about him was a sufferer;
A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit—
The first true gentleman that ever breathed.

In His quality as a gentleman, if in no other, the Authority whom Mr. Sheldon invokes would assuredly find much to pain and disgust Him in the theatre of to-day. Why should not we so far follow "In His Steps" as to try, even in the theatre, to think and feel like gentlemen?

MESSRS. SAMPSON LOW have just issued a capital two-shilling pocket edition of *Lorna Doone* on very thin paper, similar to India paper. The neat red cover suits the book well. Arrangements for this edition were made with Mr. Blackmore only a week or two before his death.

A SIXPENNY edition of Dean Farrar's school story, *St. Winifred's*, is issued by Messrs. Black. Originally published anonymously in 1861 the story was reprinted with its author's name in 1865. It has since enjoyed more than twenty editions.

WE do not know how many editions have been published of the *Imitatio Christi* in English; but the number must be very great, and the copies of the book sold of course run to hundreds of thousands. It is curious that it is still left for the Clarendon Press to announce an absolutely faithful translation from the Latin, in which no word will be altered in the interests of any party. At last we are to have the *Imitation* as it is.

Bibliographical.

WE are promised for the autumn an illustrated edition of the *Essays of Elia*. This, of course, is no new thing. So long ago as 1884 (to go no further back) an edition with "illuminations" was published in quarto by a Scotch firm. Two years later came an edition, published by Low & Co., for which L. O. Murray did the illustrative drawings. Seven years ago there was an edition by Putnam & Co., for which R. S. Gifford did some etchings. And last year we had Mr. Dent's dainty edition, with drawings by Mr. C. E. Brock. But an illustrated *Elia*! How many Lambites would it satisfy? An original writer can be truly "illustrated" only by his equal in sympathy and insight. A number of draughtsmen may tackle him pretty safely at certain points, but can any one draughtsman tackle him in all? I doubt it. Did any one artist succeed in doing anything like justice to Dante, or Shakespeare, or Milton? I doubt the power of any one artist to do anything like justice to Lamb.

There ought to be room for the "little biography" of Savonarola of which announcement is made by Messrs. Methuen. Of course we have the *Life and Times of*

Savonarola, by Pasquale Villari, published in English so long ago as 1888, and reproduced in a cheap edition so recently as 1896. There is also an American biography of the great monk, circulated in England in 1890, to say nothing of short memoirs published in London in 1881, 1882, and 1895. These last, however, hardly count; and the forthcoming "little biography" will, no doubt, be welcome as coming half way between Villari and the mere trifling booklet. Owing to the place he occupies in *Romola*, the personality and career of Savonarola ought to be well-known to all educated English people.

I read in the *Daily Chronicle* that "*Ned Myers*, a hitherto unpublished book by Fenimore Cooper, is announced by Messrs. Putnam." That Messrs. Putnam are about to issue a new edition of *Ned Myers* is, no doubt, the fact, but the book was originally given to the world so long ago as 1843. It cannot, therefore, be described truthfully as "hitherto unpublished."

Mr. T. E. Pemberton seems to have constituted himself a sort of biographer-royal to the dramatic and histrionic profession. He has already "taken the lives" of T. W. Robertson, E. A. Sothorn, Mr. John Hare, and the Kendals; and he now proposes to "take" that of Mr. Charles Wyndham, though I understand that, so far, he has only been making notes and collecting materials generally. I presume he will first present to us the memoir of Mr. Bret Harte which he is announced to have written for Messrs. Greening. From that firm we are to have a monograph on Mr. Swinburne, and it would be interesting to know if the work has the sanction and approval of the poet. Of printed matter about Mr. Swinburne in his private life there is not much. There are references to him scattered through the literary biographies and autobiographies of our time, and it would be open to anybody to collect these and string them together. The result, however, would not be very imposing. I fancy that the latest bibliography of Mr. Swinburne dates as far back as 1887.

We are promised another edition of Lord Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son*. Well, I daresay we can do with it. During the past twenty years we have had nothing but selections from the *Letters*. Three years ago Messrs. Low republished that which Hain Friswell had made long ago for their Bayard series (the one to which Sainte-Beuve's Essay was prefixed). But, in addition to that, a series of *Maxims* from the *Letters* was issued in 1884, followed by another selection for the Camelot Classics in 1889. Dr. Hill's *Worldly Wisdom of Lord Chesterfield* (1890) was, I think, derived from the whole of his lordship's Correspondence. It will be remembered that Chesterfield's *Letters* to his Godson were published, under the editorship of the late Lord Carnarvon, in 1890 also.

Mr. Murray, we are told, is preparing *The Gypsies in Spain* for publication in the revised edition of Borrow's writings. But why is the title of the book thus objectionably truncated? The full name, as bestowed upon it by the author in 1841, is *Zincali: an Account of the Gypsies in Spain*, and it was under that name that it was reprinted by Mr. Murray, in a cheap edition, in 1888. There has not, so far as I know, been any fresh edition since then.

There is a distinct boom in Borrow. Now it is Mr. Hindes Groome, the well-known authority on gipsies, who is to edit *Lavengro*, which he is to present to us in two volumes. Mr. Murray issued a cheap edition of the work in 1888. Then came the Minerva Library reprint in 1893. In 1896 the story was included by Messrs. Macmillan among their "Standard Novels," with an introduction by Mr. Birrell. In the following year Messrs. Newnes reprinted it, in 1898 Messrs. Scott added it to their Oxford Library, and during the present year Messrs. Ward & Lock have reproduced the Minerva Library reprint, with an introduction by Mr. Watts-Dunton, which many forgetful critics have taken as new.

THE BOOKWORM.

Reviews.

The Great Sisters.

The Life of Charlotte Brontë. By Mrs. Gaskell. With an Introduction and Notes by Clement K. Shorter. (Smith, Elder & Co.)

NOTHING, in French phrase, "leaps to the eyes" more saliently and vividly, upon any reading of Charlotte Brontë's novels and letters, than her entire sincerity of mind and spirit, of imagination and thought. Her splendours and her absurdities, her loves and her hates, are absolutely her own, unborrowed from the influences of culture, of society, of the *Weltgeist*. She admirably exemplifies Mr. Ruskin's saying, that genius consists, not in originality, but rather in genuineness: in that supreme conviction of the artist that his work must be done in this and in no other way; in the feeling, that faithfully and fearlessly to execute his own conception is to obey a divine command, the will of eternal beauty and truth. Charlotte Brontë knew to the full how the artist both masters and is mastered by his art, and that in the very act of creation there seems to be, and is, a "something not himself making for righteousness," for artistic rightness and justice. So she writes to Lewes:

When authors write best, or, at least, when they write most fluently, an influence seems to waken in them, which becomes their master—which will have its own way—putting out of view all behests but its own, dictating certain words, and insisting on their being used, whether vehement or measured in their nature; new-moulding characters, giving unthought-of turns to incidents, rejecting carefully elaborated old ideas, and suddenly creating and adopting new ones. Is it not so? And should we try to counteract this influence? Can we, indeed, counteract it?

When a sovereign of men objected to a sovereign of music, that there were too many notes in a certain passage, the answer was: "Sire, there are just the right number." That was the kind of reply that Charlotte Brontë made to her critics: "It happened so, and not otherwise. I saw it, heard it, and refuse to lie about it." The world of her imagination was *terra firma*, not any Cloud-Cuckoo-Land, wherein anything may happen anyhow. She was capable of writing to her friends, as Balzac wrote to his, news of her imagined characters and creatures: "Do you know that So-and-So is dead; Such-an-One married? Is it not wonderful?" At the date of *Villette* she had not read the mighty Frenchman; but Harriet Martineau discerned in that glorious masterpiece an affinity with his genius. It lies in a common passion of reality, conviction, belief in their creations: both writers make an "act of faith" in their imaginations. The shy, strong woman whom, in her circumstances and in her character, we might almost call the nun of English literature—if the title did not belong of right to Miss Rossetti—vowed obedience to the precepts of her art, faithful in the letter and in the spirit, resigned to her own inspiration. She could not have written what Walt Whitman calls "books distilled from books." She wrote books distilled from life, from personal intuition, from the intimations of the spirit, from the voices and the silences of nature, from acquaintance with grief, from an impassioned pondering. Her writings—we do not say it wholly for praise—have little savour of libraries, little air of moral purpose, little suggestion of "the literary life." But in all that she wrote, whether novels or letters, there is a wealth of words which, "if you cut them, would bleed": words vital, sensitive—not dead, but "quick."

Mrs. Gaskell's noble *Life* of her great fellow-artist and friend stands in no need of elaborated praise; but it has for some time stood in need of precisely that reverent

treatment wherewith Mr. Clement Shorter has treated it. His introduction, chronology, notes, are entirely helpful and welcome. Here is no re-writing of Mrs. Gaskell, no tampering with her text, but just those elucidations, comments, that additional or complementary matter, which the lapse of time necessitates. It is probably an edition of a classic as final as is Dr. Birkbeck Hill's edition of Boswell. We could not say more. Obviously, Mrs. Gaskell and Mr. Shorter had no call nor occasion to emulate the minuteness of Boswell and Dr. Hill. There could hardly be a more pronounced contrast than that between the immortal Londoner, burly, magniloquent, "clubbable," the idol and the terror of The Town, and the reticent, fragile, secluded woman among the lonely moors, the *vasta silentia* surrounding little Haworth. She was none of Dr. Johnson's ladies: no Mrs. Thrale, Miss Burney, Mrs. Montague, Charlotte Lennox, Hannah More; no brilliant blue-stocking, no queen of *salons*, no intimate of wits and statesmen; no elegant candidate for the honours of Sir Joshua's canvas, the whispered compliments of Burke, the rounded nothings of snuff-box-tapping Gibbon, the dear impertinences of Boswell. Yet she lived a full life in her brief allotted period. Not a peopled, thronged, frequented life, but one passed in the almost visible society of a few profound emotions, a few deep joys and sorrows, a few ardent aspirations and desires. A year or two in Brussels, a week or two in London, were the practical extent of her experience of all that portion of the world which is not comprised in Haworth. A word or two with Thackeray, Brewster, Monckton Milnes, "young Mr. Arnold"; a correspondence of no great length with Lewes and Sydney Dobell; a fair degree of intimacy with Miss Martineau and Mrs. Gaskell; that is the practical extent of her acquaintance with the contemporary living world of literature. Three tragic deaths of two adored sisters and a deplored, but deplorable, brother; her own death from the dangers of maternity, at the moment when through happy marriage she might anticipate a life of long happiness amid the calmed memories of old sorrow; those are the most arresting incidents in this volume of more than six hundred pages. Yet they abound in adventures adventured in that supremely existent world, the world of the created spirit, itself creative. We watch two young sisters busied with homely household cares in a small Yorkshire parsonage, and we learn that these are spirits of puissance and fire, indomitable, vigilant, proud. We see the elder of them turn from some dutiful loving service to her half-blind, brooding father, to deliver fearless judgment upon the great things of life and art, and that with a superb unconscious daring, an intense freshness of "large utterance." What need was theirs of crowds and libraries who communed with the ancient moors and conversed with the winds and stars?

Mrs. Gaskell felt the spell of lives so lived: she portrayed them artfully. The external scene, rugged Yorkshire, primitive, stubborn, warm-hearted, wild; the strange family, which in fiction would scarce gain credence; their varieties of the one same vehement nature, Celtic and Northern; their ways of facing life, as something to be wrestled with and conquered—even though ambition be fixed upon no more than setting up a girls' school—their zest of intellectual culture, their unremitting energy of mind: all this is portrayed with a quiet, cunning strength of hand and insight; the picture lives, breathes, pulsates. Our attitude towards the Brontës is one of slightly alarmed, somewhat amazed, wholly worshipful intimacy. We would fall in love with them, if we dared and if they would let us. These home-keeping sisters are partly Amazonian, Artemisian. Their writings contain challenges, and ring with clarion notes of war upon the world's conventions, sham smoothnesses, smug hypocrisies. It would be wounding to incur their ridicule, to detect the smile of a silent contempt upon their lips and eyes, to be made "feel small." To a Rochester, a Robert or Louis Moore,

a Paul Emanuel—oh, best-beloved of the men who never were!—they will capitulate: but they seem to expect to meet more often with Peter Augustus Malones, David Sweetings, and Mr. Donnes (*en passant*, we have a curiosity to know that egregious gentleman's Christian name). The four deathless stories keep us sensitively on the alert; we make examination of conscience; that trenchant and almost pure English has a certain haughtiness. Reading page after page, we are reminded of the Charlotte Brontë who, upon first encountering her "Lion come up out of Judah," forthwith opened an assault upon Mr. Thackeray for his "shortcomings (literary, of course)." Charlotte Brontë was amusingly sceptical as to the high genius of Jane Austen. But they resemble one another in the impress of their personalities upon their pages. Guilty conscience tells most of us that it would be a terrible thing to furnish forth material for a portrait by either immortal lady. Reading Boswell, we are moved to debate within ourselves whether the Great Man would have esteemed us worthy of the Mitre and Bolt-court, of a "dish of tea" with Miss Williams; and we wonder, whether Elia would have voted us good fellows, or uncongenial sharers in his tobacco and punch. The Brontë novels are the Brontës, and we read them with admiring apprehensions, with a wary delight. For to read them is not to turn from the turmoil of life to the inanimate repose of literature; it is to be in the visible, tangible, audible presence of two subtle, reticent, outspoken, and all-noticing ladies.

Perhaps the paramount interest of those lives, which Mrs. Gaskell's patient skill was the first instrument in revealing to the world, lies in the fact that, though they reveal a tragedy, a story of sorrows, there is nothing of that pitifulness so often attaching to the literature of literary mourners. The case of the disastrous Branwell excepted, here are noble griefs nobly borne; fears stoically confronted; disappointments met with redoubled endeavour; nowhere a touch of Wertherism, an hint of Byronism. We have nothing to forgive, palliate, condone, excuse, explain away in Charlotte Brontë. We have never cause to say "Here is weakness, and here is vanity, and here is malice, but they are natural and pardonable." These writers of books, quivering and aching with passion, lived lives of unshakable fortitude, and of integrity not less mental than moral. To use a somewhat undignified word, there was no flabbiness, no pettiness in their temperaments; and even Branwell, who lived like a hysterical and besottedly vicious woman, died like a man, upright upon his feet, as the death agony seized him. A brave book this of Mrs. Gaskell's; the record of courageous women true, like Jane Eyre, "to the finest fibre" of their natures. We close it with renewed homage to the memories of its writer and of them; close it also with Arnold's lines in memory:

Sleep, O cluster of friends,
Sleep—or only when May,
Brought by the west wind, returns
Back to your native heaths,
And the plover is heard on the moors,
Yearly awake to behold
The opening summer, the sky,
The shining moorland—to hear
The drowsy bee, as of old,
Hum o'er the thyme, the grouse
Call from the heather in bloom!
Sleep, or only for this
Break your united repose!

Of a truth, in the last words of *Wuthering Heights*, we cannot "imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth"; and they had earned their slumbers.

Hardly!

Two Stage-Plays: Denzill Herbert's Atonement; Bondage.
By Lucy Snowe. (R. Brimley Johnson. 3s. net.)

It often happens that a book is condemned by its own title-page, and here is an instance. Why *stage-plays*? Is the reader to understand that, despite their seriousness, these dramas do not disdain the stage? or that they have a special suitability and appositeness for the stage not possessed by any common play? or merely that in the eyes of the author there is some subtle difference between a play and a stage-play? And why *Denzill Herbert's Atonement*? We do not think we stretch the point in asserting positively that an author capable of a title like *Denzill Herbert's Atonement* cannot yet have arrived at that literary tact and taste without which passable literature is never produced. By all the rules of the game *Denzill Herbert's Atonement* should rest daintily on the same shelf as *The Awakening of Mary Fenwick*, *The Probation of Dorothy Travers*, *Not like other Girls*, *Wee Wife*, and *Ought We to Visit Her?* Indeed, it does belong to that same shelf, despite the fact that when you first examine it Miss Snowe's work has an air of emancipation and modernness. Denzill Herbert was a fashionable and handsome young clergyman, well married, and the first act of the atonement passes in front of his church. Harry Field and Ralph Champneys are discovered talking. "Que diable? You, Harry, 'dans cette galère?' begins Ralph." But it is really Harry who should have put the question to Ralph; for, while Harry (an "agitator" with a special animus against parsons) loves the parson's wife, Ralph is quite outside the action, and fulfils no useful function whatever. His presence among the *dramatis personæ*, not to mention the prominence accorded to him, is one proof among many of the author's lack of technique. When Ralph and Harry have finished the preliminary explanations, in the manner of Sardou's domestic servants, the congregation comes out of church:

FIRST MAN.

Rattling sood sermon that!

SECOND MAN.

Ripping! Guess he's knocked about a bit himself, don't you?

FIRST MAN.

Rather!

(They go out. Another group of ladies come from the church.)

FIRST LADY.

Isn't he wonderful? I have not heard anything that moved me so since—since Paderewski.

SECOND LADY.

Don't speak of it! I shall never forget—never—the way he said— Oh, look! Isn't that the Duchess?

THIRD LADY.

Sh! You know he said we were not to talk about "notorious sinners."

Needless to say the Reverend Denzill has had a past. That past was a girl named Susan Archer—and a child. In the second act Denzill confesses his sin to Harry Field; and then a certain Lady Deloraine, one of Denzill's flock, enters the intrigue. She has not been in the minister's study five minutes before she is talking thus:

LADY DELORAINE (seizing and kissing his hand passionately).

Kind, kind man! (looking up at him). You—you know—who is it?

DENZILL (surprised and cold).

No!

LADY DELORAINE.

You must—you must have seen, and known. I thought you did (holds his hand and looks at him). Who else could it be but—oh, Mr. Herbert—let me say it this once—I

know it's horribly, hideously wicked—but she—I know your married life is not as happy as it ought to be. (*He starts.*) Don't you see—can't you believe—it's God's sacred truth, and I'm not ashamed of it. He made us for each other, you and me, and only I have found it out—yet! Denzill, my darling, let me kiss you once.

(*She throws her arms round his neck, but he sternly repels her and rises.*)

DENZILL (*with his back to LADY DELORAINE*).

Get up, Lady Deloraine. (*She slowly rises and stands, turning away from him.*) I must apologise for allowing this to go on. I was taken by surprise, and so, I think, were you. We will both agree to forget—

LADY DELORAINE (*after a pause*).

I will only ask you to remember one thing—that if ever, as might happen, you are in need of anything that I could help in, I will not fail you.

Next comes Rachel, Denzill's wife:

RACHEL (*repelling him*).

Don't touch me, Denzill, yet.

The truth is that Susan Archer has had a word with Rachel, and Denzill's atonement now actually starts. We are not quite sure what occurs next, but it would appear that Denzill went off and lived at a great pace with Susan—presumably by way of penance. In the third act Harry Field is sailing smooth with Rachel, when the errant pastor returns like a ghost to his study, and Lady Deloraine, who had promised not to fail him, administered poison to what was once an idol of the West End.

LADY DELORAINE.

... He asked me to give it him, and I thought it was best. I did it for his sake. But it was you who killed him. (*To Rachel*) You are a murderess. (*With quiet enjoyment*) I loved him.

RACHEL (*to Harry*).

Help me.

CURTAIN.

We like that "*with quiet enjoyment*." It is an achievement of true humour. So ends this modern stage-play. Somewhat affected and bombastical, it yet represents, we think, an earnest effort to portray the times in which the author lives. Unhappily, Miss Snowe shows neither force nor skill, nor any aptitude for drama; she is an amateur, having nothing but her earnestness. Earnestness is not enough; unassisted, it merely invites the scoffer to scoff. Poor little *Atonement*. Time, "which hath an art to make dust of all things," will make dust of you too! And in future years that will, perhaps, be Miss Snowe's consolation.

Bondage, with drunkenness for subject, is rather more incoherent and improbable than its companion.

A Tyrtæan Muse.

For England's Sake. Verses and Songs in Time of War.
By W. E. Henley. (David Nutt. 1s.)

LET it be said at once that Mr. Henley's booklet is the best thing in verse that the Transvaal War has brought us, or probably that it will bring us. The description does not, indeed, entirely fit the book; for some of the pieces were written before the War—so far back as 1891 and 1892, during Mr. Henley's editorship of the *National Observer*. But the majority are not only songs of war, but the product of war-time. Good though the book is, nevertheless, not all of it represents Mr. Henley at his best. It opens seductively, with a prologue that is very Henley—one says, "Ha! ha! among the

trumpets," to hear the old masterful notes struck out again. Listen:

When the wind storms by with a shout, and the stern sea-caves

Rejoice in the tramp and the roar of onsetting waves.
Then, then it comes home to the heart that the top of life
Is the passion that burns the blood in the act of strife—
Till you pity the dead down there in their quiet graves.

But to drowse with the fen behind and the fog before,
When the rain-rot spreads, and a tame sea mumbles the shore,

Not to adventure, none to fight, no right and no wrong,
Sons of the Sword heart-sick for a stave of your sire's old song—

O, you envy the blessed dead that can live no more!

That "lifts the blood" in well-remembered fashion. It strikes the note of delight in action and energy which is of Mr. Henley's inmost character; for he "was ever a fighter," like his pet aversion, Browning (if we may venture to give pre-eminence to one among Mr. Henley's veritable seraglio of cherished aversions). And it strikes it without overstepping the modesty of art. It sounds a rousing onset to the poems which follow. Note that "tame sea mumbles the shore." The first poem is a stimulant reclamation against the early blunders of the war; not without the defect we shall have to observe further:

REMONSTRANCE.

Hitch, blunder, check—

Each is a new disaster,
And it is who shall bleat and scrawl
The feebler and the faster.

Where is our ancient pride of heart?

Our faith in blood and star?

Who but would marvel how we came
If this were all we are?

Ours is the race

That tore the Spaniard's ruff,

That flung the Dutchman by the breech,

The Frenchman by the scruff;

Through his diurnal round of dawns

Our drum-tap squires the sun;

And yet an old mad burgher-man

Can put us on the run!

Rise, England rise!

But in that calm of pride,

That hardy and high serenity,

That none may dare abide;

So front the realms, your point abashed;

So mark them chafe and foam;

And if they challenge, so, by God,

Strike, England, and strike home!

One might ask whether "our faith in blood and star" were not but too conspicuous, as the cause (in large measure) of those disasters which stirred Mr. Henley to song. But this is by the way. More important is it to note here a touch of the over-emphasis which seriously mars some of the other poems. Mr. Henley, who can be so strong without effort, in his restless lust of energy sometimes overleaps himself, and becomes violent. The kingdom of poetry differs from the kingdom of heaven, in that the violent do not bear it away. There are parts where some of these poems fairly shout in one's ear. The worst offender is "The Man in the Street," where substance and expression alike exceed. It is Mr. Henley out with a shillelagh, trailing his coat, and spoiling for a ruction: it might, indeed, have been called "In Praise of Rowdiness." Unfortunately it is lengthy, and no mere quotation would convey its total effect. Moreover, it would be unfair, for the poem is an extreme example. But of violence in expression there are examples in "The Choice of the Will." Here and elsewhere he shows a fondness for "the Pit" and "Hell" as means of forcing an emphasis,

which he might well have left to another fine poet, who surely deserves the thanks of timorous souls for having *clichéd* the terrors out of the place mentioned.

Till now the Name of Names, England, the name of might.

That will surely stand as sufficient specimen of the excess we deprecate. Yet in the same poem we have so truly virile a couplet as this:

We tracked the winds of the world to the steps of their very thrones;
The secret parts of the world were salted with our bones.

The "Envoy" which closes the book, were there nothing else, would win oblivion for that defect of Mr. Henley's quality (though the Pit does again open under our annoyed feet).

Taese to the glory and praise of the green land
That bred my women and that holds my dead,
England, and with her the strong broods that stand
Wherever her fighting lines are pushed or spread!
They call us proud? Look at our English Rose!
Shedders of blood?—Where hath our own been spared?
Shopkeepers?—Our accoutt the high God knows.
Close?—In our bounty half the world hath shared.
They hate us and they envy?—Envy and hate
Should drive them to the Pit's edge?—Be it so!
That race is damned which misesteems its fate,
And this, in God's good time, they all shall know,
And know you too, you good green England, then—
Mother of mothering girls and governing men!

This is, by the way, an example of that avoidance of the epigrammatic close in the quatorzain which Mr. Henley has made it a special study to achieve. But there is something else than this—a poem on Lord Roberts, of such splendid swing and vigour that we would its length did not forbid us to quote it whole. Here is a handful of it—though we do it wrong by such mutilation:

"They have given us war, good war so far as their burgher souls knew how:
In a dead boy's name, and for England's sake, I'll set my hand to the plow,"

Did he promise thus in the thought of his dead? We must do as we must—not will!
If he did, by the Lord, he has kept his word, for they've had of him thrice their fill.

By the dismal fords, the thankless hills, the desolate, half-dead flats,
He has shepherded them like silly sheep, and cornered them like rats.

They have seen themselves out-marched, out-fought, out-captured early and late.
They've scarce a decent town to their name but he's ridden in at the gate.

Desert and distance, treason and drought, he has mopped them up as he went,
And only those he must shed in the rush of his swoops were discontent.

Patient, hardy, masterful, merciful, high, irresistible, just,
For a dead man's sake, and in England's name, he has done as he would and must.

So three times three, and nine times nine, and a hundred times and ten,
England, you, and you junior Englands, all, hats off to our Chief of Men!

With that salutation to "Our Chief of Men" ringing in our ears, let us close the book, and thank Mr. Henley for it. His hand, that poem shows, has not lost its cunning, nor his mind its energy.

The Romance of Soot.

The Last of the Climbing Boys: an Autobiography. By George Elson. (John Long. 6s.)

THIS is a book of no literary pretensions, but of considerable human interest. Sixty years ago Mr. Elson was one of those "dim specks—poor blots—innocent blacknesses," to whom Elia loved to give a tester, and Jim White a meal. If he does not figure as the very chimney-sweep of Elia's portraiture, the differences are inessential. Mr. Elson began sweeping chimneys after the humane Act of 1842 had forbidden chimney-climbing. That he climbed them just the same was due to the fact that in country districts the Act soon became a dead letter. The new sweeping machines produced little effect on chimneys in which soot had gathered from a mixture of wood and coal fuel, and housekeepers quickly perceived that the climbing boy with his steel scraper was better worth their money. Hence the law was cheerfully and consistently broken all over England. Young Elson and his brother became chimney sweeps by running away from home. Their father and step-father were hawkers, and occasionally the boys returned from chimney-sweeping to less grimy occupations. It is curious to see how a half-starved but well-meaning and courageous boy could make his way about England on foot fifty years ago, from town to town, and master to master, toiling and running away, sleeping in barns, and upheld by chance meals and pathetic slices of good luck. Elson was not quite friendless. His mother was always glad to see his sooty face again for a few days, and the lad had kind-hearted aunts, who seem to have dotted themselves about the shires in a certain strategy of helpfulness to their grimy little nephews.

The boys had been trapped into their calling by a sweep who offered them a night's rest, but took care that they should awake so black in skin and clothing that sweeping chimneys was their only resource. Thus it was as an unwilling convert, baptized with soot by an alien hand, that Elson tackled his first cottage chimney. The plan of climbing a chimney was this:

With the feet standing upon the grate, the body would nearly fill up the width of the chimney, thus to rise was a matter of outward expansion or outward pressure. The right arm lifted above the head, the left down by the side; the elbows were pressed hard against the brickwork so as to hold the body suspended until the knees were drawn up. Then the knees on one side, and the bare heels on the other, held the body secure, while the right hand plied the scraper to bring down the soot. The elbows again reached higher up, and the knees and heels repeated their action; thus the ascent was made.

The smarting eyes and skin of the climbing boy were Elson's immediate reward, and these were quickly followed by peeled knees and festering sores. Nor was the climbing without its own technical disagreeables, such as would now be thought of as intolerable cruelties. A narrow chimney with a poor draught might almost stop a boy's breathing. Sometimes Elson forced his way up a chimney which had been the grave of a less attenuated climber, who had stuck there and died before he could be unbricked. Fumes from boiler fires only just extinguished were another danger, and more than once the lad fell from top to bottom of a chimney, overpowered. Loose brick and mortar gave him many a hard knock. It is astonishing to read that he climbed scores of chimneys exactly nine inches square. A chimney nine inches by fourteen was a regular thing, but chimneys fourteen inches square "we could, as it were, run up and down":

There were even occasions of hilarity in climbing. Many a time, when in good spirits, I have sung at my work; I and another boy in an empty house have raced each other up and down a pair of chimneys out of fun, and I have dared to ascend when even the chimney-stack

has rocked with my weight and movements, showing how use may become second nature. I remember once at Mount Sorrell, four miles from Loughborough, coming across the chimney of a house that had been pulled down, and of which this was the only remaining relic. Out of pure mischief I climbed this chimney, though it rocked from side to side with my weight.

Among chimneys which Elson did not love were those which had only one shaft for two or three fireplaces. In these it was possible to be smothered by smoke from the fire of the next-door house. It was also possible to make a mistake when descending, and come down into someone's porridge pot, or, as happened with one of Elson's comrades, to appear without warning in front of a gouty old gentleman whose fright equalled his own.

Travelling sweeps had the camping-out privileges allowed them that were enjoyed by roving tinkers. But they were regarded with more suspicion within doors, and hence, in self-protection, they developed a cant of their own. Mr. Elson says: "If one sweep met another strange member of the trade, to detect whether he was a greenhorn . . . the first would say: 'Can you patter cant (speak slang)?' and, if a veteran, the stranger would reply: 'Oh, yes, I know; nix is nothing, and a penny roll is a win' buster,' and directly they were hail friends well met." This cant was often used by a sweep to his boy in the presence of a housekeeper, whom it was not desirable to enlighten as to his thoughts. If a mistress had refused a good price, "he would put his head under the cloth before the grate, and call out: 'Now, boy, are you near the top?' when an indistinct reply descended, which indicated he was not getting on very well. 'That's right, my lad, pike the lew,' meaning burk the top; then the lad would cry 'All up,' and come gently down, leaving the top part of the chimney full of soot for some other better-paid sweep to clear away." Other curious cant words are explained by the author:

A chimney-sweep was a feiker, and, strange to say, the words feik and feikment stood for those things which had no cant name. The sooty cloth was a tuggy, the scraper a deacon, the brush a switch, the soot was called queer, the horse was a prod, the cart a drag, rain was parney, a field a puv, a fire a glim, a door a gigar; water, lag; potatoes, spuds; a servant a dolly, and deiking for looking. A stick was a cosh, a knife a chif, eyes were ogles, and the face a mug, a house a ken, a barn or hovel to sleep in a crib, a cap a cadie.

Mr. Elson's story is lightened by the gleams of a happy nature. It is clear that he worked with a will, and bore cold and an empty stomach as well as they can be borne. There were gentlemen's houses where chimney-sweeping was a joy, so nobly was it rewarded with hot food and drink, and kind words from the maids. Even in farmhouses kindness and liberality were the rule, and Elson won them in larger measure by his ability to sing love songs and sing them well.

At last our author came to town and swept chimneys with the jointed brush of civilisation. The great event of his London career was the part he took in chasing and, instrumentally, bringing to justice three burglars whose attentions to a West End mansion, unfortunately for themselves, synchronised with his own. This exploit brought Elson fame and money, and the last pages of his book recount his emergence from soot to affluence. But the cream of the book is its stories of travelling chimney-sweepers, and of village life fifty years ago. Once, standing on a hill overlooking Leicester, the author was able to indulge these proud reflections: "Among my first thoughts was one of pride that I had climbed fully three parts of the myriad chimneys I then beheld; that, too, I had swept them better than any other lad." Mr. Elson has done well to give his life-story, to which the Dean of Hereford writes a suitable preface.

The School and the Man.

A History of Bradfield College. By Old Bradfield Boys. Edited by Arthur F. Leach. (Henry Frowde.)

In some respects those who write the history of a school of to-day are happy in their lot. The whole life of the school has passed within the memory of man; the first boy who entered the school may be still alive; dubious points may be cleared up authoritatively, and the space at the author's disposal is sufficiently great to allow of his dealing with subjects of interest at greater length than is possible in the case of a foundation over three hundred years old. Bradfield College, Berkshire, is quite a modern public school, for this year it celebrates the fiftieth year of its existence, but into these fifty years it has crowded as many incidents and as many hairbreadth escapes as many a school of five or six times its age. Its founder was the Rev. Thomas Stevens, the "squarson," as Sydney Smith put it, of Bradfield, where his family had lived for several generations. Dr. Jowett summed him up more or less epigrammatically as "a funny old gentleman who had tied a school up to a church"; and, in fact, the foundation of the school was almost an accident. Mr. Stevens succeeded his father as rector and "lord" of Bradfield in 1842, and set to work to restore the church as a memorial to his father. Then it struck him that a choir was wanted, so he decided to found a school to train choir boys after the model of Magdalen College School. The school began with six boys in August 1850, and from this it grew up round the Old Manor House with an irregular regularity, till after a struggle of about thirty years it ended in the bankruptcy of Mr. Stevens and in all but the total wreck of the school. Dr. Gray, the present headmaster, was the man who pulled it out of its difficulties, and now in its fiftieth year Bradfield can boast a roll of over 300 boys, and a growing reputation.

The two things for which Bradfield is remarkable are its Founder and its Greek Play. Of the Founder as he was in 1880 Dr. Gray gives the following description:

Imagine a short, burly figure, clothes anyhow, thick-soled boots, a mere patch of shirt showing, with a wisp of white tie with dangling ends, and on the top of this there was set a colossal head, a massive, formidable forehead, eyes penetrating, and at times almost fierce, with a peculiar way of watering when roused. But it was the beard that was the feature of the man — patriarchal, sweeping, flowing — something you could not get away from, which seemed to move and sway with every emotion. A man of masterful power, was my feeling when he began to speak his words of dignified welcome. . . . The next morning I walked with the Warden down to "morning chapel" in the Parish Church. His outdoor costume was even more original than his evening attire. A black cut-away coat, which hung like a sack round his figure (he told me afterwards he had bought such things sometimes from a travelling tailor); a real beaver hat, such as is rarely seen in the England of to-day; and a very crooked stick slung with a little black bag on end over his shoulder, in which he carried his letters for the day to his "den" over the College gateway.

Such was the man who spent all his patrimony in founding a public school; and went bankrupt, in 1881, with debts of £160,000, of which about half were secured. Just before the crash came, and towards the end of the term, the Warden announced that he could not yet pay his staff, and that they must be content to wait. One of the assistant masters (then reduced to five) went boldly to the Warden's "den" and said: "Mr. Warden, I have no money to go home with." To which he replied: "Well, my dear, then you must stay here. I can feed you, but I cannot pay you." Stay he did, but the incident marked the beginning of the end.

The book is full of school stories of the familiar type, which hardly bear transplanting from their surroundings; but there is one perfect translation from English verse

into Latin verse, which was shown up to Mr. A. D. Godley, of all persons, who was then a master at Bradfield. It is, as the author says, worthy of a place in *Lyra Fricola*.

And thou hast joined her gentle train!

was Latinised as:

Et placidam caudam duxisti rursus in unum!

For unconscious humour of the Dog Latin order this will be hard to beat.

The recent performances of the "Agamemnon" in the Greek theatre in the school grounds have acquainted the civilised world with the fact that Greek plays are performed at Bradfield. Of the theatre it will now suffice to say that the present Warden built it in 1888 in an old disused chalk-pit just outside the school grounds, and that the orchestra is shaped on the model of that at Epidaurus in the Peloponnesus, that theatre being chosen as the type because it is the only one in the mainland of Greece which escaped the alterations introduced by the Romans. In 1881 the *Alceste* had been played in the buildings under the management of Mr. F. R. Benson, who was an old schoolfellow of Dr. Gray at Winchester. Some of the Bradfield boys took part in the performance, and found special jests of their own in it.

Among them was an unrehearsed effect behind the curtain, when F. R. Benson, having barked his shin over a plank behind the scenes, used some very vigorous expressions not in the original Greek. Happening to see one or two youngsters who had been in hearing, he, with great presence of mind, gave them a short but impressive lecture on the evils of strong language, but did not explain his own *lapsus linguae*.

Bradfield is now in a flourishing condition, and, we say it with all respect, could not have a better advertisement than its Greek theatre and Greek play.

Other New Books.

THE REMARKABLE HISTORY OF THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.

By GEORGE BRYCE

The Hudson's Bay Company seems suddenly to have attracted the attention of writers on the British Empire. Not long ago we reviewed Mr. Beckles Willson's two sturdy volumes on this subject, and now Mr. George Bryce comes with his book dealing with the great Company, the French traders of North-Western Canada, and of the North-West, X.Y., and Astor Fur Companies. Naturally, the later book covers much the same ground as the earlier, and, indeed, differs from it only in detail and in treatment. Those who are interested in Canada will read it eagerly, but those of the general public who have already tackled Mr. Willson will not venture on a second work on the same subject. Mr. Bryce is a professor in Manitoba College, Winnipeg, and has already written much on Canadian history. He is a practised writer, and his book is more attractive in style than that of his predecessor. The history of the North-West is a chapter of fine romance, and many passages in Mr. Bryce's work are as fascinating as any work of fiction. At the present moment it is worth noticing that old John Jacob Astor, a German merchant of New York, and the ancestor of the family of Astors, went to Montreal about a hundred years ago to trade in furs, and used to export skins to China, where high prices are the rule. Washington Irving's *Astoria* is based on the travels of Astor's traders, but he never tells us where these people went, as Dr. Cones remarks, for the simple reason that he never knew. The book is well illustrated with reproductions of portraits and of pictures, and with photographs. The appendices are useful, and that containing the Cree syllabic characters is most interesting as a specimen of what may be termed Indian shorthand. The index is fair, but might be fuller with advantage. (Sampson Low, Marston & Co.)

BRITISH AMERICA.

"BRITISH EMPIRE" SERIES III.

This is the third volume of the series dealing with the various parts of the British Empire, which is founded on the lectures delivered at the South Place Institute, Finsbury, on Sunday afternoons, from 1895 to 1898. Like the other volumes, it is of a patchwork description, being the work of many hands. It is an admirable book of reference, but hardly lends itself to quotation. Canada as a whole is dealt with by J. G. Colmer, C.M.G., and by Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, High Commissioner. Ontario is written about by Mr. Byrne, its Agent; New Brunswick, by Mr. C. A. Duff-Miller, its Agent-General; and so on, all the different provinces of the Dominion being handled by thoroughly competent writers. Messrs. Williams and Coryn treat of the Canadian Aborigines, and Sir J. G. Bourinot writes a short review of Canadian Literature, a literature which has the advantage of possessing the two languages English and French. Sir Augustus Adderley introduces us to the West Indies, Sir William Robinson writes on the Bahamas, Sydney Olivier, C.M.G., on British Honduras, and Dr. Emil Reich on British Guiana, so that the student may feel sure that those who instruct him have more than a bowing acquaintance with their subject. The book is full of information, and if it is brought up to date now and then will always be an invaluable book of reference. There are two well-drawn maps of Canada and the West Indies, but we would suggest that maps on a larger scale of each separate province and island would add largely to the value of the book. The concluding volumes of the series will be "Australasia," and "General," which will include the small outlying portions of the Empire. (Kegan Paul.)

THE GENEALOGICAL MAGAZINE. Vol. III.

The third volume of the *Genealogical Magazine* does not yield in interest and importance to its predecessors. Among many noteworthy items, there is a series of somewhat startling articles that expose the extraordinary "nobility epidemic" now raging in the French Republic. Not merely are titles assumed wholesale by the *bourgeoisie*, but a special state department exists, the Chancery of Titles, which on receipt of a fee registers, and confers official sanction upon, these ludicrous personal adornments. Titles are bought and sold in this country shamelessly enough in the political market, and both the baronage and the baronetage have been thereby irremediably degraded, but the logical genius that characterises the Gallic intellect has gone so far as to establish an absolutely open door for titular free-trade, whereas we have hitherto not ventured beyond the stage of backstairs jobbery. In point, however, of unaffected and barefaced honesty, the advantage appears to lie with the French system.

The vexed question is once more raised as to the occurrence and the meaning of the word "baronet" prior to the creation of the degree of baronets by James I. in 1611. Undoubtedly the term is used frequently before that date; but even if those antiquaries are wrong who maintain that in all such cases it is merely a scribal error for "banneret," it is certain that there can be no connexion whatever between the baronet of the Middle Ages and his namesake of the seventeenth century. The baronetage of James I. was an entirely new class of nobility, created under specific and unprecedented regulations and for a particular purpose.

The almost forgotten story of the burying of Cromwell's body on the field of Naseby is revived in a letter, and meets with an astonished and indignant protest from Mr. Algernon Ashton. Neither writer seems to know that the tale comes from the Harleian Miscellany.

One of the most useful papers is that explaining the origin of the insensate law which since 1835 has prohibited marriage with a deceased wife's sister. As the author says, ignorance concerning that iniquitous transaction is widespread and profound.

We do not know whether Mr. Beerbohm Tree and Mr. John Morley are subscribers to the *Genealogical Magazine*. If so, the former will doubtless have rectified the heraldic anomalies that deface his presentment of "King John," and the latter will have learnt not to "debruiſe" his speeches with a "bar sinister," an armorial charge that never did and never could exist. (Elliot Stock.)

THE EARLY POEMS OF ALFRED,
LORD TENNYSON.

EDITED BY
J. CHURTON COLLINS.

By the "early" poems Mr. Churton Collins intends, in accordance with the laws of copyright, all Tennyson's writings up to and comprising the two volumes of 1842. His edition of these is a "critical" edition. That is to say, in the first place, it is complete, the pieces discarded by Tennyson, together with his Cambridge prize poem on "Timbuctoo," being put in an appendix; and, secondly, Mr. Collins has been at the pains to hunt out and record all the innumerable variants and corrections which the poet's restless itch for technical perfection led him from time to time to introduce into his work. The result is exceedingly interesting to the student of poetic style who is not afraid to be let into the secrets of the workshop; to the general reader it will perhaps be rather bewildering. Then Mr. Collins has supplied a critical introduction, and a comment after the fashion of his earlier book, *Illustrations of Tennyson*, abounding in parallel passages and the citation of "sources." The value of this sort of criticism is an old subject of controversy, and Tennyson's own views upon it were not obscure. Nevertheless, although some of Mr. Collins's quotations are farfetched, the majority of them seem to us to be really helpful and to throw a flood of light on Tennyson's temperament and artistic methods. For a precise scholar Mr. Collins is uncommonly lax in his own licence of quotation. Browning would hardly thank him for assigning to him the "couplet":

The little more, and how much it is;
The little less, and what worlds away.

The familiar lines are truncated, and they are not a "couplet." (Methuen.)

ORDINALE CONVENTUS VALLIS
CAULIUM.

BY W. DE GRAY BIRCH,
LL.D., F.S.A.

The document, carefully edited from a Paris MS. by Mr. Birch, is a useful addition to our knowledge of the daily life of a mediæval monastery, a subject which has received growing attention in England since the publication, half a century ago, of S. R. Maitland's stimulating work on *The Dark Ages*. It is the "Rule" of a small monastic order, known as the Order of the Val-des-Choux. The history of these communities has been written by J. A. P. Mignard, to whose work that of Mr. Birch is supplementary. The original Priory of Val-des-Choux, or Val-des-Choues ("Valley of Cabbages," or "Valley of Owls"), stood in a deep forest on the bank of the Ource. It was founded just at the end of the fourteenth century, and its Rule is adopted from that of the Carthusians, by the addition of elements taken from Benedictine and Cistercian sources. "Silence and peace," says Mr. Birch, "simplicity of life, the greater part spent in prayer and religious exercises, appointed hours and methods of work, rest, worship, and relaxation, seem to have made up the daily routine in this sequestered spot hidden in the forest of Villiers-le-Duc." Some twenty dependent houses of the order are known, of which three were planted in Scotland. Those were the Priors of Ardhattan, Beaulieu, and Pluscardine. Into England the Order does not appear to have made its way. The text of the Rule is edited by Mr. Birch with extreme care, and he adds a full historical and bibliographical preface, a calendar of documents concerning the Priory of Val-des-Choux in the departmental archives at Moulins-sur-Allier, and two very full and useful indices. (Longmans.)

Fiction.

A Son of the State. By W. Pett Ridge.
(Methuen. 6s.)

MR. PETT RIDGE is moving surely, and not slowly, in the right direction. As a student of humanity—and we do not think the phrase is too big for him—he has worked his way from the surface inwards. In his earlier sketches, amusing as they were, he was merely flicking the froth of experience at his readers. Then, after feeling his way hither and thither with a novel or two, he gave us *Mord Em'ly*, and proved that he could search beneath the surface-humours of the street, the tramcar, and the third-class railway carriage and discover character. Now, finally, with *A Son of the State*, in which we have, as it were, a Mord Em'ly who happens to be a boy, we find even more proof that Mr. Ridge can turn the searchlight of humour upon the serious problems of life. It is evidence of Mr. Ridge's firmer hold upon character—and deepening sympathy with it—that he has made Bobbie so interesting. We have spoken of the book as serious, and the redemption of the slum-boy by way of the industrial school and Her Majesty's navy is a serious matter enough; but one may be serious with a smiling face, and Mr. Ridge's humour is unfailing, even at the funeral of Bobbie's mother. The curate speaks:

"So you're all alone in the world, my boy? (Bother the wind!) Now you must make up your mind to be a good lad, because there are plenty of people ready to help good lads, and very few who will waste their time over bad ones."

"That's what I tell him, sir," remarked Mrs. Rastin ingratiatingly.

"And don't forget—" the curate stopped and sneezed. "I mustn't stay here in this wind," says he. "Good-bye, my lad."

"Say good-bye to the kind gentleman," Bobbie.

"So long," said Bobbie, resenting the interference of Mrs. Rastin. "Look after that cold of yours."

Bobbie's life up to date is concentrated in his courtesy to the curate—"so long!" But therein lies Mr. Ridge's strength, the swift delineation of characters which he has watched by phrases and repartees to which he has listened. Thereafter Bobbie lived on the edge of crime with Mr. and Mrs. Bat Miller, Mr. Leigh and the Duchess, so-called from her reminiscences of a higher life, who ran what the detective called "a rare old little snide factory." But the State snatched Bobbie as a brand from the burning and sent him to an industrial school. The rest of the book is an account, written with delightful insight, as well as with appreciation of the personal imperfections which combine into success, of what the State can do when it takes a slum-boy in hand and insists that he shall run straight and not crooked. Bobbie's talks with the coastguard by the convalescent home turned him finally into the straight.

"Old Lady," declared Coastguard, blowing at his tea, "will have the best. She don't mind what she pays for her Navy, but she will 'ave it good."

"I see what you mean," said Bobbie.

"Do you like the outside or the inside?" asked the angel at the cake.

"Both, miss," said Bobbie.

"None of your ne'er-do-wells for her," went on Coastguard. "None of your thieving—"

"You've dropped your knife on the floor, little boy," said the angel. "That's a sign you're not careful."

"None of your bad characters, none of your criminals, for my Navy," she ses, "'if you please.' And, jigger me," said Coastguard explosively, "jigger me if the Old Lady ain't right."

"You ought to call her 'Her Majesty,' uncle. You'd look silly if she happened to be listening."

One fault we must point out in the framework rather than the filling in of the story. Mr. Ridge, always optimistic, and seeing, as he should see, possibilities of good in the

worst, is unduly optimistic in his belief in coincidence. Myddleton West and Sister Margaret coincide with Bobbie too inexplicably for our credulity. And the characters are so real when they do meet us that their creator could afford to take a little more trouble in bringing us together. Finally, as regards the difficult question of conveying the pronunciation of the uneducated by misspelling, we would suggest that "ses" might as well be "says," and "bis'ness" represents nothing more than the ordinary pronunciation of "business."

Mis'ess Joy. By John Le Breton.
(Macqueen. 6s.)

AN English farm in the days of the Regency is the scene of Mr. Le Breton's new story, and a charming silhouette of *Mis'ess Joy* preludes a pleasant note. The "peccadillo" is the name given to the farmer's love-child by the provincial wit and beau, Mr. Pierrepont, whose association with the farmer and his parochial sisters leaves something to be explained. And his witticisms, addressed to simple people who cannot be expected to understand them, smack somewhat of priggishness. Richard, the hero, who is introduced to us while still a child, deals most effectually with him:

"And what saith the King? Come my Lord Richard, tell us, have you analysed the sorrows yet, and found them so highly spiced that they give insipid life a subtle joy?"

"I'm going to be a pirate," said Richard, fingering his guinea. He seldom understood Mr. Pierrepont, but he did not care to own this; and so, long ago, he had hit upon the ingenious idea of abruptly introducing a new subject when the conversation grew too difficult for him.

To Richard Mr. Pierrepont is constituted mentor in ordinary; but he does not save him from a dull marriage with his plain cousin Susannah, nor Joy from a miserable fate. For all that it ends unhappily, the book is sufficiently exhilarating to read. The two maiden aunts in love with Mr. Pierrepont and tenderly attached to each other are generously imagined.

The Minister's Guest. By Isabel Smith.
(Fisher Unwin. 6s.)

FROM a country rectory owned by a squire-parson—a type now almost extinct—to the demure villa of an Independent minister in a manufacturing town, was a terrible transition for Nannie. The minister was an excellent man, but, to her face, he spoke of her as "our young friend"; and his maiden sister dragged her to Dorcas meetings, where her wretched inefficiency with the needle made her horribly conspicuous, and a mark of scorn to the blameless Mary Leek. Upon her, however, she had her revenge; for Mary's betrothed, the stalwart son of a distinguished deacon, much preferred her defects to the perfections of his Mary. So, when sharp shears cut the thread of the registrar of marriages at the moment when the company was assembled at the chapel to witness the nuptial rites, so pointed a hint was not lost upon James, who openly turned his attention to Nannie—with the happiest results. The story is told at immense length in such unstudied English as: "It had not seemed then as if he cared for Mary other than a friend," and is adorned with quotations both German and Greek. A mind steadily concentrated upon a story of this class should as nearly realise a condition of complete repose as during the inevitable working hours of this troubled life it might reasonably hope to do.

Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the week's Fiction are not necessarily final.
Reviews of a selection will follow.]

THE BELLE OF TOORAK.

BY E. W. HORNING.

Mr. Horning is one of our best Bush novelists, and the crisp opening pages of this story promise good things. "She had fallen a happy victim to the law of contrasts. Society favourite and belle, satiated with the attractions of the town, and deadly sick of the same sort of young man, she had struck her flag to one who might have swum into her ken from another planet; for the real bush is as far from Toorak and Hawthorn, and the Block in Collins-street, as it is from Hyde Park Corner." Such is Moya Bethune, when she and her fiancé are looking over their future home in the bush. While they are doing this it becomes necessary for Rigden to lie to a police sergeant in his fiancé's presence, and several vivid interests are at once created. (Richards. 3s. 6d.)

THE MESMERISTS.

BY B. L. FARJEON.

A characteristic melodrama, in which the complications arising out of love and murder are dealt with by an unscrupulous mesmerist. Between the same covers the author publishes a play on the same subject with the remark: "Readers may feel some interest in comparing the Novel, which is intended for the closet, with the Play, which is intended for the stage, and in observing the points of difference between the two." (Hutchinson. 6s.)

FITZJAMES.

BY LILIAN STREET.

"No, it isn't heart. It's the Juan in a man that appeals to women; and he has it strongly. But what is the Juan? Nobody has discovered. And—it certainly cannot be bought." Thus was Galt FitzJames, a typical strong Englishman, poet, artist, critic, and squire, described by the woman who had bewitched him years ago, but whom he now found to be married to a money-bag. A sweeter woman trips on the scene, and from the two motives there rises an interesting and ingratiating love-story. A good character is Galt's old valet, Johnson, who is seventy, and quotes Shakespeare with great aptness. He believed in "the Bible and Shakespeare and the other poet—his master." (Methuen. 3s. 6d.)

OUR COVE.

BY J. HENRY HARRIS.

Thirteen short stories of fishing-cove life in Cornwall, touching on simple themes with quiet humour. "The market with us for widows is dull; but they look comely in chapel, and are much given to the sucking of peppermint lozenges on Sunday evening. There is some consolation in peppermints—the girls take to them in the winter, or after they have been jilted. A widow with a little money need not, however, suck peppermints longer than she likes, for usually there is a 'staid' man somewhere about with a 'gift in prayer,' or some other excellence, open to an investment." (Simpkin, Marshall.)

AN AMERICAN VENUS.

BY ELLIOTT PRESTON.

This is described as an "emotional romance." It may be that, but it is also a tissue of bombastic reflections and impossible incidents. The author, in pronounced Byronic costume, forms the frontispiece. The title-page is adorned with a quotation from Miss Corelli's *Ziska*. This is the sort of thing: "Let me hasten to say (lest I lose caste) that I love the ladies—nay, I adore the very dust on which they tread. . . . Forgive me, gentle reader, that I stray thus from my theme. . . . But to return!—Ah! I was describing Eleanora's bathing-costume, was I not?" (Deane. 6s.)

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Literary Tall-Talk.

BETWEEN literary small-talk and literary tall-talk the sober lover of books has little peace nowadays. A reasonable quantity of each would not offend. It is interesting to know a fact or two about writers whose books compel discussion; it is interesting, also, to speculate on tendencies, and cast the horoscope of talent. But each of these pleasures is somewhat beside the mark of present and practical enjoyment of literature, and their too eager purveyors have to answer for much mental indigestion. Chatter about this author's *message*, and that author's *message*, fills the ear to an extent which almost forbids mere private reading. The mind wearies of facts which time shows it does not need to store, and of theories which time shows it need not examine. Again we say, in moderation both chatters are acceptable; and to see them in this degree, and in combination, you have only to read Hazlitt's *Spirit of the Age*. To see them in excess—*vide* Press. However, it is always easier to ignore petty facts than promising theories. The gossip will be recoverable within twenty-four hours, and will fill the half-hour of a railway ride. But the theory, the classification, engages the mind at once, and from the first offers a discovery. The small-talk may distract, but it is the tall-talk that lures and tires.

These discontented and disconnected ejaculations—they are no more—are prompted by a perusal of a magazine "wholly composed" of new and would-be-important interpretations of modern literature. It is with the quarterly arrival of *Post-Lore* from Boston that we feel how many rungs of the ladder of Culture we have yet to climb. Our only doubt is whether anyone can be so cultured as the readers of *Post-Lore* seem to be. There is here no mingling of the cup. The April-May-June number begins with a translation of Sudermann's symbolical drama "The Three Heron's Feathers," which opens with a dialogue between a grave-digger and the Burial-wife. After some forty pages of symbolism the reader is regaled with an original poem, called "Marah of Shadowtown," grey and tepid:

The days go by so wearily
Like crooked goblins, eerily,
Like silly shadows, fast and still,
Wind-driven and drearily.

Like the gray clouds are my eyes gray, mother,
Like them, heavy as things grown old
Only the clouds' tears are but dream-tears—
Lifeless, cold.

From this we proceed to an essay entitled "George Meredith on the Source of Destiny," which to our unannointed eyes appears to be a typical young-womanish screed illustrating the tall-talkativeness of what the writer calls "this latter nineteenth-century of ours." Lest we are mistaken, we will give the writer's summary:

This, then, is George Meredith's message. We have eaten of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the power to choose between the two has entered into our souls. We are under the rule of a great overhanging law. Destiny's wheels we cannot stop, but through our capacity for moral choice, our hands lie on the button that moves the whole machine in its relation to our own individual lives.

We had innocently thought that all this might be picked up elsewhere; and that Mr. Meredith's novels were only a commentary on some such truths. But it is the way of tall-talk criticism to make the document under discussion yield up every elementary truth. You are to rout up and glorify an author's common philosophy as if the fundamentals were not much the same in all men. There are rules of life, too, which are accepted; why proclaim them like an auctioneer's clerk shouting "Correct" as he counts a set of spoons? Of Mr. Meredith we are told with *emprassement*: "This novelist-philosopher has taught us, then, that folly tends to bring failure, but that righteousness is stronger than folly. He is not content to stop in his teachings even here. [We should think not!] In *The Tragic Comedians* he goes still further, and deals with the interrelations of the moral and intellectual. For character rules intellect, as intellect reacts upon character." Of what novelist—of what writer—might not this be said? In the same spirit of false importance Mr. Meredith's views on fate and free-will are irresponsibly collected and compared with those of—Beowulf, Shakespeare, and Browning!

It is in his scientific insight into moral life that Meredith's growth beyond Beowulf, Shakespeare, and even Browning appears. We of the nineteenth century would be sorry to think that we had not one master who goes even deeper into our modern life than these. We believe that, as men of the later twentieth century look back upon our day, they will call George Meredith our greatest literary exponent.

We do not discuss this comparison between a living writer and three poets in three distant ages born. We only ask: Has it any value or charm whatever? and does it amount to anything more than an assertion that of four lamp-posts in the Strand the most westerly is nearest to the Nelson Column? It is fit that a paragraph which tumbles Mr. Meredith among a mixed crowd of immortals, and brings him out on top, should end on such cobble-stone English as "They will call George Meredith our greatest literary exponent."

We might still have escaped headache but for the next paper, on "Clews to Emerson's Mystic Verse." Here we have portentous interpretations of verse which is alleged to be occult, but is, in fact, nearly as plain as verse can be. Emerson says that the Universe

Sole and self-commanded works,
Fears not undermining days,
Grows by decays,
And, by the famous might that lurks
In reaction and recoil,
Makes flame to freeze and ice to boil;
Forging, through swart arms of Offence,
The silver seat of Innocence.

On this we have a page of high falutin explanation:

When the Living Universe builds a house, it builds it out of its own soul substance; while man sleeps and loiters, the Unconscious ceaselessly toils. In the phrase "grows by decays," Emerson embodies, I believe, the law of the conservation of energy. The magazine of divine power is exhaustless; does energy sink out of sight here, it is only to reappear yonder; the tree decays, but out of its fertilising substance new plants may spring up; the coal under the steam boiler of the locomotive is consumed, but the swart goblin has lost no whit of his might: he just slips darkling up into the stream, makes the driving-rods his swift shuttling arms, and, grasping with his steel fingers the felloes of the wheel, whirles you half a thousand miles over the green bulge of the earth ere set of sun. The mystic Power grows by decays; and also, by "the famous might that lurks in reaction and recoil," reconciles apparent antinomies and opposites. . . . If a heavy body be rolled up an inclined plane. . . . If you lift the big pendulum of the clock in the corner. . . . &c.

The writer is great on minutiae. "Even in so slight a matter as choosing a name for his verses 'To Rhea

Emerson's philosophical belief is glimpsed." It is rather a relief to know, however, that "the title of the poem 'Hamatreya' has baffled a perfect and indubitable explanation." The writer says that, after searching "through all the Hindoo scriptures," he has "reached a conviction which approaches absolute certainty that 'Hamatreya' [the title of one of Emerson's poems] is Emerson's imperfect recollection of Maitreya, or—that he purposely coined the word." The next paper is "A Defence of Browning's Later Work," which informs us that a poetical slough of despond may be transfigured by hard thinking. We believe it may be created by the same means. In all these papers we find that jerkiness of thought and aridity of phrase which one associates with notes taken at a lecture or extracted with enthusiasm from a newish book. There is also an inveterate tendency to fine writing. The defender of Browning's *Ferishtah's Fancies* and *The Parleyings of Certain People* cannot lay out her subject without declaring that these poems have been obscured by "mists of non-appreciation" in which she proposes to open a "rift" in the hope "that some glimpses of the splendour of the giant form behind them can be gained." Similarly the eulogist of Mr. Meredith seems to think she will gain the ear of the reader by saying that genius, "in its formed philosophical theories may err, but not in its perceptions of life"—and that therefore "in his inspired representations of life and character, coming not from thought alone, but from his whole nature, *Meredith cannot err*." The italics are ours. Like the cuckoo, the Bostonian critic selects an author in which to find, or deposit, a gospel; and once the selection is made the poor man has no peace. He is not even allowed to err.

The last item in our *Folk-Lore* is a veritable tit-bit. It is a kind of examination paper in "Present-Day Poets," in which some very solemn questions are propounded by the editors. We give below a few of these questions, and the answers which we have framed from the residue of our intellect:

Is Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton too narrowly restricted to emotional themes and emotional means of expression for bounteous poetic cheer, or is the perfect alliance of her emotional range and workmanship the very source of her lyric excellence?

We give it up.

Does Mr. Thomas Bailey Aldrich escape the usual penalty for laying emphasis on delicacy of finish so that the result is satisfying in its happy precision? Or does he seem cold and elaborately superficial? Does he, so to speak, carve cherry-stones oftener than he engraves cameos?

We don't know. Does it, "so to speak," matter twopence?

Is Miss Louise Imogen Guiney's scholasticism too dominant in her work? Does she lack human warmth? Or are her restraint and good taste the index of deeper feeling? Does her cultured thought and chaste concentrated power of expression lift her above the ranks of the minor poets?

Perhaps they "does." We will leave it open.

Does Miss Hannah Parker Kimball's portraiture of Judas Iscariot reveal a capacity for dramatically creating development in character? Are her lyrics too grave, or is it their especial blend of high seriousness and intellectual insight with unforced expression which gives them unusual richness?

We should say that the blend named would give unusual richness to any human composition; but, there, we are tired. We have seen the message of Mr. Meredith calmly defined in half-a-dozen lines, and we have been told that Browning's *Ferishtah's Fancies* and *Parleyings* "give complete expression to the thought of the age." What is left for us to do but learn the message by heart, and buy a pocket edition of the poems? Oddly enough, we have no inclination to do either.

The Future of the Six-Shilling Novel.

THE six-shilling novel has now existed riotously for some ten years, and, to the casual observer, its position would seem to be assured, impregnable. Yet the real fact is that those most concerned are profoundly dissatisfied with it. A publisher whose reputation for successful fiction is second to none in London said the other day that he was ready to try any experiment for a change, even to the length of issuing novels at thirty-one-and-six; and he was not talking facetiously. A famous authors' agent, commenting on this despairing remark, said that novels might be issued at thirty-one-and-six or at half-a-crown, but that, in any event, the six-shilling price was bound to be altered. A leading West End publisher, to whom we mentioned the matter, said, with the utmost calmness "I think it would be a good thing, as regards many novels, to return to the thirty-one-and-six figure." "But surely," we urged, "such a change would destroy your business in novels so issued." "It would," he said; "and I should be delighted to have my business in certain novels destroyed absolutely. You must understand," he added, "that no one has any fault to find with the present price of novels which sell well. It is the work of the new author, and of the author with a reputation but no circulation, that causes the trouble and the dissatisfaction. Such work, take it all round, results in a loss to the seller.

Here undoubtedly was truth. A successful novel is satisfactory, whatever its price; and, therefore, it is satisfactory at six shillings. The bookseller makes his fourpence out of it, and it does not stick on his shelves. What the publisher makes out of it is known only to the publisher: but that he makes something considerable is proved by the extraordinary competition among publishers for successful and partially successful authors. Any one acquainted with the *arcana* of a publisher's office, and especially any publisher's literary adviser, knows the ravenous appetite of publishers for successful authors. Let a man write a novel which sells only two thousand copies, and he will find half-a-dozen firms anxious to accept all risks and pay him from £75 to £100 on account of royalties upon delivery of the MS. of his next novel. Even if a novel sells but a thousand copies, thus clearing its first edition, the author may in future choose his publisher from several, and obtain from £30 to £50 in advance on his next MS.

It is the new author who fails to make a hit that is the cause of tears. In nine cases out of ten the publisher expects to lose on a first book, and he is not disappointed. He prints, say, seven hundred and fifty copies, and sells from two hundred to five hundred. If he sells five hundred he considers himself well out of the affair. As for the author, his receipts vary from *nil* up to £10—and this for something upon which he has probably lavished a year's labour. The worst is that the sales of first books are steadily decreasing; they are from thirty to forty per cent. less to-day than they were six years ago. And so there is naturally disgust. The author is disgusted because his reward is so absurdly trifling; the publisher is disgusted because he is often at an actual monetary loss; and the bookseller is disgusted because he finds his shop encumbered with dead stock. The question may be asked: "Why are mediocre novels produced at all? No one wants them." But someone does want them. The author wants them, and the author will have them. It was assumed ten years ago that the abolition of the three-volume novel would mean the abolition of the mediocre new writer. But how blind an assumption! You cannot change nature by an edict of the libraries. Mediocrity is immortal; nothing can scotch it. Instead of being anni-

hilated the mediocre new writer is more numerous than ever. "But," you say, "why does the publisher publish the fellow's stuff and why does the bookseller buy it?" Simply because hope springs eternal in the human breast, and because the supply of non-mediocre authors is unequal to the demand. The publisher is very human, and the bookseller scarcely less so. Every sparrow that lights on their window-sill may prove to be the Arabian bird; and after the bitterness of a thousand disappointments they hope on, hope on, with a sublime and miraculous fortitude.

In the meantime the condition of affairs has distinctly worsened for author and publisher, and, perhaps, also for the bookseller. Who, then, has profited, since the public certainly reads more than ever? It is the libraries which have profited. They buy for four shillings that for which they formerly paid fifteen, but one does not perceive that they have reduced their subscription-rates. Silently but steadily money has been diverted from the pockets of the publishers and authors to the pockets of the libraries. In the old days nearly every three-volume novel cleared its expenses, and a new author could be fairly sure of a reasonable emolument. A number of blamelessly inane writers existed in comfort upon their modest share of so many thirty-one-and-sixpences. Then the fiat went forth, and without a cry these unfortunate persons sank beneath the waves of reform. That was nothing—at least, it was nothing to literature. But it was not all. The public buy more novels now than they did, but the improvement in this respect has not by any means been sufficient to atone for that tremendous leakage into the pockets of the libraries. Now, as then, the average reader gets his novels from the library, and not from the bookseller. And the libraries pursue their golden path, purchasing as many, or as few, of a novel at six shillings as they did of a novel at thirty-one-and-six. The successful, the meritorious writers have suffered to some extent, and, as for the rest, they have suffered enormously.

It is useless to blame the libraries. The libraries occupy an empyrean in which remonstrances cannot be heard. There are two remedies, and it is these remedies which the publishing world is now thoughtfully pondering. The first is to increase the price of speculative novels, and to rely for support wholly on the libraries instead of partly on the libraries and partly on the booksellers. The objection to such a course is that the libraries would probably decline to sanction it. Why, indeed, as commercial concerns should they sanction it except under compulsion? And who would apply the compulsive force? The second remedy is to decrease the price of speculative novels. Now the three-and-sixpenny novel has been tried and has proved a failure; but the half-crown novel, the shilling novel, have yet to go through an exhaustive test. Decidedly there are signs that the half-crown novel is coming into fashion. Mr. John Murray began a new half-crown series only last week, and it is reported that Mr. Heinemann will shortly renew his activity in this direction. The object of cheapening the speculative novel is twofold—first to popularise it, and second to reduce the pecuniary risks attached to it. If you print on thinner paper, and use a flimsier binding, spending £60 instead of £100 on an edition at a smaller price per copy, you will naturally stand to lose proportionately less on dead stock. And it is the risk of loss, not the hope of gain, which chiefly affects the publisher of a first book. As for the new author, the new author must openly reconcile himself to writing his first book for naught. He must not even pretend that the thing will be remunerative. It should be distinctly understood on all hands that a first book can only pay when a miracle happens. On such an understanding the new author may start fair—without illusions. After all, a first book is a mercantile experiment, and it is only proper that the experiment should involve the least possible risk.

The Travels of "Ivanhoe."

By way of practical joke a type-written copy of Scott's *Ivanhoe* was recently sent round to the publishers under the title *When John was England's King*. It was returned in every case, among the letters of rejection being the following:—

Messrs. Macmillan & Co. regret to have to return *When John was England's King*; but they fear that interest in historical fiction is diminishing. Their reader's report of the story is in the main favourable, but he points out that the charge of imitating *The Forest Lovers*, one of Messrs. Macmillan's recent publications, might perhaps be difficult to rebut. In his opinion, the author of *When John was England's King* would perhaps have made a better and more readable book had he studied Mr. Hewlett more carefully.

Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton must decline *When John was England's King* in its present form, but if a few modifications were made they feel that the story might be very popular and profitable. The author, they would suggest, might advantageously substitute a Christian girl for the Jewess Rebecca, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton having noticed, in their long experience, that there is more money in Christianity than in Hebraism, at any rate in books. They would also recommend an infusion of Scotch dialect; and a pathetic scene between Ivanhoe and his mother—if it could be arranged—would, they feel convinced, add to the story's vogue.

Messrs. Ward, Lock & Co. would willingly publish *When John was England's King* if the author would make a few alterations. They beg to bring to his notice the accompanying works by Mr. Guy Boothby, an acceptable writer in their employ, and to suggest that he should adapt the story to the minds of Mr. Boothby's numerous readers. By giving Ivanhoe more dash and address, by modernising and accelerating the style, and removing much of the antiquarian padding, this effect would, they feel sure, be attained.

Mr. John Murray begs to return the MS. of *When John was England's King*, and to quote a passage from his Reader's report thereon: "I do not recommend this novel, although it is painstaking and thorough. The author would, I think, have been wiser had he chosen another name for his hero. Ivanhoe has already been used by Sir Walter Scott."

Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co. thank the author of *When John was England's King* for the offer of his story as a serial for the *Cornhill Magazine*, but are obliged reluctantly to return it, having made arrangements for a number of serials by Mr. S. R. Crockett.

P.S.—The foregoing correspondence is, of course, absolutely fictitious.

Things Seen.

The Ambulance Corps.

BEHIND the parched Parade Ground stretched the barracks, and from the windows leaned the regulars. Coatless, hatless, arms akimbo on the window-sill, flannel shirts open at the neck, their jolly sun-burnt faces smiled at the little army of boys who had possession of their Parade Ground. The annual inspection of a flourishing Cadet Corps was proceeding, and it amused the regulars to see the red-coated children with carbines, bayonets, and a band, busy at the business of war.

In the corner of the Parade Ground stood the Colonel's

dog-cart—the Colonel of an historic regiment, who, in full uniform, with a languid aide-de-camp at his heels, had come to inspect the battalion. And near the dog-cart stood the tragedy of the inspection. It was a small tragedy, a matter of four little boys in red with a military stretcher—the Ambulance Corps. They were perfect in their drill; they had mastered First Aid; they were young, strong, brimming over with energy, but nobody had needed them, and the inspection was drawing to a close—that was the tragedy. None had fallen, none had fainted, all had gone through the most surprising evolutions without the slightest distress. The Ambulance Corps alone had waited and watched, and nothing had happened. The Colonel glanced at the clock, made a speech to the boys, mumbled a word to the commanding officer and walked towards the dog-cart followed by his languid aide-de-camp. The Ambulance Corps watched despairingly. Each small figure was taut, each face was flushed, each pair of hands clutched nervously at the Ambulance poles. The battalion stood at attention as the Colonel (he was a trifle stiff in the joints) raised his foot to place it on the high step of the dog-cart. As he did so the horse started, the Colonel was thrown off his balance, and fell sideways to the ground. In the twinkling of an eye a cloud of dust rose about the place where the Ambulance Corps had stood, there was a gleam of red and four pair of legs scampering across the ground, then the startled battalion saw the prostrate Colonel pounced upon; they saw him hustled into the stretcher, his arms gesticulating, with more vigour than is usual with a disabled man; they saw the commanding officer race towards the spot; they saw the Ambulance Corps retire, but with heads erect, and a proud air. But the Colonel, as he drove away from the Parade Ground, looked ill-pleased.

A London Night.

Too hot to sleep indoors, I drag a chair on to my balcony, meaning to doze there. But the freshness of the night rouses me, and I am held in a waking dream.

There is hardly any air. The dark silhouettes of the trees in the square stand out, statuesquely graceful against the grey blue sky—through the black masses of shade beneath them, one or two lights glitter from the farther side.

A mysterious cat creeps across the street and glides through the railings into the dark garden. And just above the roofs, the misty yellow moon hangs low in the sky, and plays hide-and-seek among the chimney-pots.

I close my eyes, and my thoughts wander off to a low Sussex shore, where the light shines over the water, and the tide is creeping up round the wall of an old sea-wall. The waves ripple in gently. I hear their whispers as they hasten to overtake each other on the beach. Or is it the longed-for rain upon the plane-trees in the Square? I look up to find the dusty wood pavement transformed into a shining waterway by a water-cart. The wet street stretches its glittering length far away up to Regent-street—long lines of gas-lamps throw trails of light across it—a lumbering Post-office van shows flashes of scarlet as it rattles past on its way to Paddington with the early mails. Now and then a belated hansom—the cat of London traffic—slips past; a couple of tired waiters stand for a moment beneath my window, and separate with a friendly "Gute nacht."

There is silence for a space—the town sleeps—then a brilliant meteor flashes across the heavens, and loses itself in the soft shades of green and saffron which have begun to tinge the east—a delicate rose colour creeps up into the sky—the caress of a new-born breeze wakes the trees, and another hot day has dawned.

Correspondence.

A Dream Sentence.

SIR,—This morning I awoke with the following sentence on the tip of my tongue: "No private duty is so paramount but that a man may neglect it in the service of the State."

Now, although I cannot defend the use of the word "paramount," it seems to me that the idea set forth is sufficiently striking. How it came into my head I am wholly at a loss to discover. The thought is perfectly new to me so far as I am aware. I may, of course, have read it somewhere, but I feel convinced that, if I have, I have never before appreciated its meaning. Perhaps some of your readers, well versed in ethics, may be able to provide the reference.

All I can say is, that I went to bed after reading several chapters of Mr. Edward Spencer's *The Great Game*, and I do not think that the idea could have been suggested by his entertaining account of "Horses of the Century," jockeys and owners. Or can it be that in Dreamland I earn a precarious livelihood by writing (or speaking) on the ideas of "Rightness and Oughtness"?—I am, &c.,

G. S. LAYARD.

Lorraine Cottage, Malvern: July 26, 1900.

Style.

SIR,—In John Stewart Mill's essay on Nature occurs the following remark: "The first thing to be done with a vague term is to ascertain precisely what it means." It is therefore necessary to define style before commenting about it, and this is just what the correspondents of the ACADEMY fail to do. "It is synonymous with literary intellect, brain, thought"; "or subtle thing that grows"; "the natural expression of the literary individuality"; are some of the meanings presented in the ACADEMY, all of which, to my mind, are absolutely wrong and misleading.

Style is just a *mode or manner of expression and nothing more*, and it is generally qualified by adjectives, such as pure, good, bad, picturesque, turgid, pleasing, perfect, easy, simple, diffuse, classical and many more. Style, then, without the adjunct of an expletive, is only a verbal garb of thought, beautiful or ill-fitting as the case may be.

Of course, it is the aim of the literary aspirant to acquire a good and, if possible, a charming style, a con summation only to be reached by a thorough acquaintance with authors whose mode of expression delight and charm. Afterwards, continuous practice may help the literary mind to develop its own style. The grub of patience may burst into the full-blown performance. Every author whose name is stamped upon the literature of the period has a style *sui generis*, which may not always be a pure or even a correct one. But the impress of individuality is often the golden hall mark of popularity. An author of distinction has generally a distinctive style.

Constant converse with good verse, and its practice, successful or otherwise, ensures a limpid, delightful style. The rhythm, melody, and choice of words necessary for the art impart a musical flow and a gracious elegance to composition. For instance, the pure style of the *Vicar of Wakefield*, or the vivid word-painting of *Jane Eyre*, are doubtless due to the fact of their authors being poets.

"From grave to gay, from lively to severe," mark the attributes of an enchanting style. And, for my own part, I can endure the matter of any book or article, even if threadbare or commonplace, as long as the manner, the style, can arrest and delight.—I am, &c.,

ISIDORE ASCHER.

July 31, 1900.

Our Weekly Competition.

Result of No. 45 (New Series).

LAST week we offered a prize of One Guinea for an *invented* poetic quotation which if introduced into print would be likely to gain currency. We award the prize to Mr. Alfred Edward Wright, Inverinate Villa, Attadale-road, Inverness, for the following:

SELF-PRIDE.

Lost to all sense but that of inward pride,
Wrapt in himself, he needs no other guide;
No magnet points him to a distant pole—
Himself the chart, the compass, and the goal.

Other invented quotations sent in are as follows:

Be not a coward, fearing to face
Life, when disrobed of pleasant grace,
But with soul-eyes find thou the key
Of grace, in Life's adversity.

[A. V., London.]

Dead leaves aglow with autumn's sun,
Loves long dead alive in memory.

[H. R., Gt. Grimsby.]

To work is good, yet let him rest who can;
Life without leisure makes a soul-less man.

[M. F., London.]

When first the Angels bore thee to the House of Hopes and Fears
The World beside thy cradle laughed for joy—thou wert in tears!
So live, that on the eve of thy Great Sleep
Thou laugh for joy and all the world shall weep!

[M. N., London.]

Blindly squandering powers of Infinity o'er trifles of time.

[H. L. G., Edinburgh.]

A night for goblins to bestride foul air.

[W. M. R., Manchester.]

Strong in consistent inconsistency.

[A. M. P., London.]

Yes! I will own that subtlety I lack,
Which proves twice two are five and white is black;
Substance, not shadows, ever I pursue,
And seek not for the glittering, but the true.

[B. D., London.]

Let Love train eagles and discard her doves.

[W. A. S., Sale.]

O friend of mine, thou led'st me safe,
Thro' the valley that I went—
Past the swamps of Might-have-been
To the hills of Pure Content!

[Z. McC., Whitby.]

The soaring lark above
Takes up the tale of love,

There pois'd on pinion spent,
And on its song intent,

[A. F., Exmouth.]

What a long list at close of day,
If duly writ in pen and ink,
The things we *thought* but did not *say*,
The things we *said* but did not *think*.

[R. F. McC., Whitby.]

O Pilot strong unfurl my sail,
Our barque must skip the sea,
And while the sullen billows wail
Come display thy skill to me.

[L. M. S., London.]

To hide a charm is to display a better.

[H. M. C., Glasgow.]

Serene in boredom's dull tranquillity.

[E. W. H., Manchester.]

Afraid to starve, denied his fill to stuff,
He never knows when he has had enough.
Alike dyspeptic (his digestion such)
Whether he eats too little—or too much.

[J. D. A., Ealing.]

The ceaseless tongue that speaks the senseless mind.

[E. R. W., Farnborough.]

Pardon wouldst have, and yet wouldst hug thy sin;
Wouldst cling to hell, and yet the heavens wouldst win.

[F. W. S., London.]

..... Things that become
As weary-worn as loves that mate too soon.

[E. H. H., London.]

He is the noblest victor in life's fight
Who knows what's wrong and ever does what's right.

[H. G. H., Ruswarp.]

The tortuous pathway to the Peak of Fame.

[E. C. P., London.]

Fame stole his clothes and left him stranded on the sands of Time.

[B. B., Birmingham.]

For God is God, all others are but selves.

[E. A. M., Eltham.]

Gold is the magic wand to which all doors respond:

Save the Divine ones—pure love, good health, and life.

[G. S. A., Ilford.]

Solitude, slum, crowds, parks, and ceaseless sound.
London! In thee the best and worst are found.

[S., Manchester.]

'Tis better to have lived and died
Than never to have lived at all.

[A. M. C., Leicester.]

Too close the vivid present weaves her spell,
And we are blinded by the visible.

[I. S., Brighton.]

The wayside rose soon drops
Its withered bloom which aids the parent stem,
And with its fading beauty scents the tomb
With sweetest odour of a sainted life.

[W. A., Edinburgh.]

Each failure but a stepping-stone,
To lead to something higher.

[L. M. L., Stafford]

Other replies received from: W. G., Hexham; E. G., Bradford;
A. F., Exmouth; R. F. McC., Whitby; E. S. C., Kidderminster;
A. W., London; J. S. M., Dundee; C. R. B., Derby; F. von S.,
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HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

Fishwick (Henry), The History of the Parish of Preston (Stock) 3s/6

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Ames (Percy W.), Chaucer Memorial Lectures, 1900 (Aster)

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Green (J. R.), An Introduction to Vegetable Physiology (Churehill) 10/6

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